

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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1. A method of delivering content from a content delivery server to a personal computer system that includes a computing subsystem and a disk drive, the method comprising:
 - selecting a network address for the content delivery server;
 - selecting a server-contacting program;
 - storing the network address and the server-contacting program in the disk drive;
 - installing firmware in the disk drive to initiate execution of the server-contacting program after the disk drive is connected to the computing subsystem in the personal computer system, wherein execution of the server-contacting program includes using the network address for connecting the personal computer system to the content delivery server; and
 - configuring the content delivery server, the configuring comprising:
 - receiving user information from the personal computer system while the personal computer system is connected to the content delivery server; and
 - delivering content to the personal computer system in response to the user information.
2. The method of Claim 1 wherein:
 - the disk drive includes a protected area; and
 - the network address and the server-contacting program are stored in the protected area.
3. The method of Claim 1, wherein the firmware resides in a disk controller circuit.
4. The method of Claim 1, wherein the firmware delays initiating execution of the server-contacting program until a predetermined period has lapsed.
5. The method of Claim 1, wherein the personal computer system displays the content during a boot sequence.

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1 6. The method of Claim 5, wherein the content is periodically changed
2 according to a presentation schedule.

1 7. The method of Claim 1, wherein the firmware delays initiating execution
2 of the server-contacting program until the firmware determines that a selected number
3 of monitored events exceeds a threshold.

1 8. The method of Claim 7, wherein the monitored events includes the
2 number of boot-ups in the computing subsystem.

1 9. The method of Claim 1, wherein the content is selected from the group
2 comprising: a content display program, a game, an entertainment program, a utility
3 program, entertainment data, advertisement data, and music data.

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1 10. A content delivery server for delivering content to a personal computer
2 system that includes a computing subsystem and a disk drive, the content delivery
3 server comprising:

4 means for communicating with a personal computer system, wherein the
5 personal computer system comprises:

6 a disk drive comprising:

7 a network address for identifying the content delivery
8 server; and

9 a server contacting program;

10 a disk controller circuit for, upon the occurrence of a
11 selected condition that is determined by the disk controller
12 circuit, initiating execution of the server-contacting program after
13 the disk drive is connected to the computing subsystem in the
14 personal computer system, wherein execution of the server-
15 contacting program includes using the network address for
16 connecting the personal computer system to the content delivery
17 server;

18 means for receiving user information from the personal computer system
19 while the personal computer system is connected to the content delivery server;

20 means for maintaining a database including the user information
21 associated with the disk drive in the personal computer system; and

22 means for delivering content to the personal computer system in response
23 to the user information.

1 11. The content delivery server of Claim 10, wherein the disk controller
2 circuit automatically initiates execution of the server-contacting program when the disk
3 drive is connected to the computing subsystem in the personal computer system.

1 12. The content delivery server of Claim 10, wherein the disk controller
2 circuit delays initiating execution of the server-contacting program until a
3 predetermined period has lapsed.

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1 13. The content delivery server of Claim 10, wherein the firmware delays
2 initiating execution of the server-contacting program until the firmware determines that
3 a selected number of monitored events exceeds a threshold.

1 14. The content delivery server of Claim 13, wherein the monitored events
2 includes the number of boot-ups in the computing subsystem.

1 15. The content delivery server of Claim 10, wherein the personal computer
2 system displays the content during a boot sequence.

1 16. The content delivery server of Claim 15, wherein the content is
2 periodically changed based upon a presentation schedule.

1 17. The content delivery server of Claim 15, wherein the content is selected
2 from the group comprising: a content display program, a game, an entertainment
3 program, a utility program, entertainment data, advertisement data, and music data.

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